

4
A
Letter to a Country Parson,

OR,

A REPLY

To the Rev. F. WOLLASTON'S

ADDRESS TO HIS FLOCK,

TO

CAUTION THEM AGAINST BEING MISLED BY THE
WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING,

OR RECEIVING

JACOBIN TEACHERS of SEDITION,

WHO INTRUDE THEMSELVES UNDER THE SPECIOUS
PRETENCE OF INSTRUCTING YOUTH, AND
PREACHING CHRISTIANITY.

BY a LOVER of his COUNTRY, and a FRIEND to TRUTH.

*Blessed are ye when Man shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all
Manner of evil against you FALSLY for my Sake.* Matt. 5. v. II.

London:

PRINTED FOR AND SOLD BY

MR. MATTHEWS, STRAND, MESSRS. BYFIELD AND CO,
CHARING CROSS, AND J. OMER, DEPTFORD.

[Price One Shilling.]



PREFACE.

WHEN the Address, which is the subject of the following pages, was put into the hands of the writer, he considered it as a sudden ebullition of Anger from a man that had been made the dupe of some malicious Spirit, whose enmity against Godliness, if not exercised within the immediate pale of his own church, had induced him to fabricate the grossest falsehood for the purpose of covering persons, whose characters were unimpeachable, with ignominy and reproach; and as it was conceived that from its local nature it was
only

only intended for distribution amongst the Author's own Flock, it was thought that silence, and the judicious conduct of the persons who were so unhand-somely attacked, would be the best refutation of the charges which had been brought against them; but as the publication in question has been circulated with great industry, and found its way into distant parts of the country, and for the moment made an unfavorable impression upon the minds of men of the first respectability, who are engaged in the diffusion of divine knowledge, it appears that the cause of God and Truth is concerned on the occasion, and, as the venerable and truly excellent archbishop Leighton has observed, “ It is
“ sometimes expedient for Christians
“ to vindicate, not so much themselves,
“ as their Lord and his truth, *which*
“ *may suffer in the reproaches cast upon*
“ *them.*

“ *them.* Did they rest in their own
“ persons a regardless contempt of
“ them, were usually the fittest an-
“ swer; but where the holy profession
“ of Christians is likely to receive, ei-
“ ther the main or the indirect blow,
“ and a word of defence may do any
“ thing to ward it off, there we ought
“ not to spare to do it.”

What was therefore first begun and intended as a private letter, the writer now considers himself called upon by the duty he owes to his God, and regard he has for every thing that concerns the extention of the Redeemer's kingdom, to submit to the candour of the public the following remarks upon that publication.

Circumstances of the most serious nature having arisen out of this Address,

an enquiry was very properly made into the authenticity of the charges brought against the persons implicated therein, by those whose immediate duty it was to watch over the safety of Religion and the preservation of public order; and the utmost candour and liberality of sentiment having been exercised in the investigation, the fallacy of the accusation has been seen, and the characters of the persons injured thereby, protected in the most honorable manner: much is therefore due to them, and it is hoped their reward is in Heaven: much is also due to the public, and to the cause of truth, and on this consideration it has been judged necessary to notice a publication, calculated to do inconceivable injury to the parties concerned, as well as to the establishment of Sunday Schools, and the prosperity of Zion.

A

LETTER

To a Country Parson, &c.

SIR,

WHILST Infidelity and Atheism are making gigantic strides to cover the face of our British Israel, and philosophy, falsely so called, is sedulously employed in setting up the light of human reason above that of revelation, in order to invalidate the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, and annihilate the very profession of Christianity, it becomes every sincere believer in the glorious doctrines of the Cross, to come forward and *earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the Saints*; * but the pages of antient and modern history afford innumerable proofs that the man who dares attempt to stem the united torrent of profligacy and infidelity, must be content to suffer persecution, with its attendant penalties.

* Jude. v. 3.

In the first æra of the Christian Church, when the pure doctrines of evangelic truth were faithfully and zealously preached by the Apostles, and their successors in the gospel ministry, their names were often cast out as evil, and the most infamous arts practised to depreciate their characters, and stop the progress of the Christian faith; and when the unbelieving Jews, or less enlightened Gentiles, could no longer object, either to the holiness of their lives, or purity of the doctrines which they taught, they frequently accused them as enemies to Cæsar, and of all civil government. When our blessed Redeemer went about doing good, and condescended to visit the abodes of publicans and sinners, he was said to be *a glutton and a wine bibber*; * at other times, when mercifully employed in healing the maladies of men, he was accused of *casting out devils through the prince of devils*; † and when he was carried before Pilate, immediately preceding his crucifixion, his enemies testified against him, saying, *we found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar*: ‡ if, therefore, our Lord, in the days of his flesh, was falsely charged with offences which his holy soul abhorred, it is not matter of surprize

* Luke 7. v. 34. † Matt. 9. v. 34. ‡ Luke 23. v. 2.

that

that in this age of infidelity, his followers should experience the same unmerited reproach. *If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household.* *

It is to be feared that whilst you have endeavoured to caution the people committed to your charge, against the insidious designs of foreign and domestic enemies, you have not been careful to seek the influence of the Holy Spirit, or it is presumed your address would not have been the vehicle to disseminate gross misrepresentations, illiberal reflections and unchristian sentiments: far be it from me to accuse you as the *author* of the unmerited calumny contained in your pamphlet, because I humbly hope, you are incapable of dishonoring your profession by a conduct so unlike your divine Master; but as you have too readily credited hints and suggestions from men of corrupt minds, and given to “Airy nothing, a local habitation and a name,” it must remain for the decision of the public, whether you have not made yourself responsible for every assertion contained therein.

* Matt. 10. v. 25.

The spirit of your address, sir, may, in some measure, be appreciated by the advertisement prefixed thereto: "it were to be wished" (say you) "that the law gave to the minister of " parish, the power of proceeding, in a SUMMARY " way, against such as intrude, unasked, into " the fold committed to his care." *Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon,** that a Christian minister, in the peaceful reign of George the Third, should breathe a sentiment more befitting the character of a Jefferies or Bonner, than a disciple of the Prince of Peace, or desire the institution of an inquisition in a land of gospel light and liberty; it would ill become a herald of salvation, after preaching, *Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth peace, good will towards men,* † to be the executioner of punishment upon ministers of the same Gospel, or to call his flock to witness a flagellation at the cart's tail or whipping-post, on the backs of such as dare to instruct the ignorant in the way of holiness, merely because they have not asked him permission: blessed be God, our ancestors have handed down to us, wise and salutary laws, possessing the pure spirit of toleration and universal benevolence; and the wis-

* 2 Sam. 1. v. 20.

† Luke 2. v. 14.

dom of our legislature, even to the present day, is carefully exercised in guarding all the professors of our Holy Religion, against the cruel talons of persecution, or intemperate and misguided zeal.

Perhaps it may not be unnecessary to remind you, that the power you are so anxious should be delegated to the servants of the church, was once possessed, or rather assumed by the Jewish priesthood, and with what discretion they exercised it, let the following facts declare: when the Proto-Martyr Stephen was brought before the Jewish Sanhedrim, and falsely charged with preaching against the temple and their law, he boldly stood forth and briefly rehearsed the dealings of God with their forefathers, from the call of Abraham, out of Ur of the Chaldees, to their own time, when they crucified the Lord of Life and Glory; and having condemned their persecuting spirit, they could no longer restrain their malice, but, "*proceeding in a SUMMARY WAY,*" they *stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him* *, until he fell asleep in Jesus.

* Acts 7. v. 57 and 58.

Again;

Again ; when Paul went up to Jerusalem and “ intruded unasked ” into the fold of the Levitical Priesthood, a great commotion arose in the city, occasioned by an accusation of some ignorant and evil minded Jews of lesser Asia, that he had taught the abolition of the ceremonial law ; violent hands were instantly laid on him, and he was only rescued from immediate death by the interposition of Lysias, the Roman Tribune, who, to appease the people, having the next day convened a meeting of the Jewish priests and elders, they quarrelled among themselves and would have proceeded against the Apostle in a “ SUMMARY “ WAY,” by tearing him in pieces, had not the chief captain rescued him by force, and commanded the Roman soldiers to conduct him in safety to the castle. Instances are not wanting, even in our own history, to prove that the same power, when vested in the hands of enthusiasts and bigots, has been exercised with the most unrelenting cruelty, and caused the stones of Smithfield to stream with the blood of martyred saints. It would certainly be unreasonable to suppose you can really be thirsting for a return of those unhappy days ; but, I presume, the words of our Saviour to his Disciples are not inapplicable on the present

sent occasion; *ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of**.

I am sorry, sir, to find by the outset of your address that the weakness of declining years prevents you from labouring in the Lord's vineyard, and particularly as it is to be feared this imbecility has betrayed you into some inaccuracies of expression. That "there have been unbelievers from the earliest ages," is indisputable, and that "the light which strikes conviction on one, often fails of doing it on the mind of another," is equally true, and, considering the moral turpitude of man, is "not to be wondered at;" but that this is not to be "*lamented*" is neither sound logic or good divinity. Is it not to be deplored that men, many perhaps of whom have sat for years under the sound of the Gospel, should remain to the present hour unenlightened by divine truth, and be pursuing the broad road that leadeth to destruction; or that the Infidel, in a state of mental darkness, should endeavour to depreciate the character of the Son of God, by reducing him to the rank of human nature, and take delight in exhibiting him to the world, shorn of all his honors? Ought we not to mourn over the thousands of

* Luke 9. v. 55.

our fellow creatures, who are still *in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity**, and who, unless the light of conviction should strike into their minds in this state of existence, must, according to scripture prediction, perish everlastingly; and would *you* not lament if the wife of your bosom, or the child of your own bowels, unregenerated by divine Grace, should be consigned to the shades of eternal death? Revise, sir, your work, and speak as becometh sound doctrine.

It is not necessary for me to follow you through your dissertation upon the progress of Infidelity and Irreligion, from Voltaire, d'Alembert, Diderot, Rousseau, and Wieshaupt, to the London Corresponding Society, and the various societies branching from it; but it must be observed your aim has evidently been to prove, that some religious persons, associated under the title of the Union Society † of Greenwich, have imbibed

* Acts 8. v. 23.

† This Society is composed of men of piety, who associated themselves together for the purpose of establishing, at their own expence, Sunday Schools in the adjacent villages, and extending the knowledge of divine truth as widely as possible, within the sphere of their exertions; and being composed of persons of various denominations, agreeing in
the

imbibed their principles, and, under the specious guise of reforming the morals of children and persons of riper years, are endeavouring to disseminate sentiments of the most pernicious tendency. A grosser calumny, or more unfounded insinuation never issued from the press; and it becomes an act of indispensable justice, to open the eyes of the public against the delusions into which they have been led by your injudicious address. With equal propriety you might have asserted, that the treachery of Judas, the heresies of Arius, Socinus and Pelagius, and the blasphemies of Francis Spira, were concentrated in the members of that society, as to have charged them with entertaining principles which they hold in equal abhorrence with yourself.

Had an appeal been made to our courts of law on the present occasion, and proceedings instituted against you for the exculpation of the characters of men, thus injuriously held up to reproach and public execration, there cannot be the smallest doubt, but that you would have experienced the frowns of retributive Justice, and the essential doctrines of Grace, and to distinguish themselves from another Society of a similar description, they assumed a title, which has been used by Mr. Wollaston as a term of reproach.

been convinced by its administrators, that no man's reputation is to be wantonly attacked with impunity: our Saviour however has enjoined his followers rather to *do good to those that hate them, and pray for such as despitefully use, or persecute them,** and therefore, the members of the Union Society, appear to have preferred an open and public denial of the heavy charges made against them, to subjecting your family to the participation of punishment, through your indiscretion, by referring it to a court of law.

You have been pleased to inform your parishioners and the public, that these persons are the emissaries of France, and on enquiry respecting their political principles, "found all your suspicions verified:" If, sir, you had the smallest shadow of proof to substantiate this charge, it became you, as a good member of the state, to have apprized the executive government of the existence of such a society, and stated the grounds upon which your suspicions rested, that an enquiry might have been judicially instituted, and the truth accurately known; but as its members have publicly disavowed your allegations, and challenged you to the proof, you ought, for

* Matt. 5. 44.

the vindication of your character, either to support your assertions, or recant the illiberality of your reflections.

You say, information has been given you, that this Society “ is the same which, under the “ name of an Itinerant Society, was driven “ from a public house in the neighbourhood of “ Greenwich some little time since.” If bare assertion was to pass current for truth, this would be sufficient to brand the character of every member of the Union Society with infamy and disgrace; but unfortunately for you, it is as ill founded as all your other charges, and a more wicked insinuation was never imposed on the public. I can confidently state, that for the last twenty years, no Society of that name, or description, has existed in Greenwich, or its vicinity; but the circumstance to which I conceive you allude, must have been a branch of the Corresponding Society, which some time since usually assembled at a public house in the town, and when discovered was very properly dispersed; but not *one* member of the Religious Society in question ever was, either directly, or indirectly connected, or in any way associated with it, and it is right sir, that you should either name the author of this wicked

and injurious calumny, or tell the world you have discovered it to be a falsehood more worthy of the fiend of the bottomless pit.

Your observation that “ the perverting of
 “ evidence, and knowingly falsifying it, ad-
 “ mits of no excuse, but deserves the most
 “ sharp reprehension,” is a truth to which I
 cordially agree, and regret that we are so often
 called upon to exercise our reproof, even against
 the conduct of men of whom we had hoped
 better things ; how far you have subjected your-
 self to censure, upon your own axiom, in the
 circumstance you relate respecting the hire of a
 house at Chislehurst, by the person you call the
 leader of the Society at Greenwich, must be
 referred to your own conscience ; it is however
 necessary the public should be informed, that
 when some of the members of that Society hired
 the house in question, it was judged equitable
 and proper, as strangers, to deposite half a guinea
 in the hands of the landlord, as an earnest of their
 intention to abide by the bargain made, which
 he accepted ; but in consequence of the excess
 of your ire, against these persons, and their abet-
 tors, and your attack upon the landlord for
 having let the house for their use, he was de-
 firous

firous, shortly after the transaction, to annul his agreement, and offered to return the money given as earnest; they however determined to keep *their* faith, although this gentleman had been induced to break *his*. This is the simple state of the affair, and it is matter of surprize that you should attempt to make it an instrument of sedition, and have drawn so unwarrantable an inference from your own premises; it brings however to my remembrance the conduct of a man, who having set a house on fire was the most vociferous in alarming the neighbours of their danger.

It ill comports, fir, with the character of a Minister of the Gospel of peace, to endeavour to stir up his people to resist, *vi et armis*, any attempt made to promote their moral or spiritual good; for I am at a loss to understand the exhortation to your flock, to concur with you in “*driving*” these intruders and keeping out others from “the parish,” in any other way; because you must be aware that licenced places and preachers are under the protection of our laws. It is profitable to go to the Bible for instruction, and I therefore recommend to your perusal, the fifth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, where we
are

are informed, that Peter and John were in danger of being slain at Jerusalem by the High Priest and Jewish Council, for having dared to preach the Gospel of Christ, not only “un-asked,” but even when *forbidden*, until Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, more wise than his brethren, reasoned against so “SUMMARY” a proceeding, using, among others, the following excellent argument, *Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel, or this work be of men it will come to nought; but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.** On this occasion it is not unfair to say, that the Jewish Doctor appears to have possessed more wisdom and moderation than the Christian Rector.

If teachers from this, or any other Society come into your parish, and are found faithful witnesses of the New Covenant, give place, fir, to wrath, considering them as members of Christ’s mystical Body, and following the example of the great Apostle of the Gentiles say, *Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ IS preached and I therein rejoice, yea and will rejoice.†*

* Acts 5. v. 38. 39.

† Phillippians 1. v. 18.

I hold the principles of Jacobinism in as great detestation as yourself, because they are subversive of all order; are contrary to the sentiments of right reason; and being closely connected with Atheism, militate against the power of godliness: were they to gain footing, and be established within these realms, it is to be feared that we should be reduced, by our declension from the truth, to a greater state of Infidelity than a neighbouring country; as the beams of divine knowledge being more clearly discerned in Britain than in any other nation upon Earth, its abasement, by apostacy, would engulph us in such an abyss of mental darkness, as justly to call forth the exclamation, *how is the gold become dim, how is the fine gold changed!* * If, therefore, you could produce a shadow of proof to establish your assertions that the members of the Union Society, are “French Emissaries,” “false Jacobins,” “Emissaries from Seditious Societies,” “Persons more than suspected of Sedition,” “Enemies of Mankind,” “Infernal Spirits,” “&c.” it would not have been safe, and very far from my inclination, to have noticed your address, but as through your representation to a dignitary of the church an investigation has

* 2. Sam. 1. 19.

taken place, and he has declared in the most unequivocal terms, that the persons accused are innocent; ought you not, sir, as an honest man, to have told the public you have been misinformed? And, as a Christian minister, it was your indispensable duty immediately to have discountenanced the whole of this falsehood. What then can be said for your having circulated your address with the utmost assiduity, and when apprized of the malignity of the poison which it contained, not taken any steps to *heal* the bleeding wounds of men thus tortured upon the spear of calumny, through the malice and wickedness of your informant? Surely this is not characteristic of an ambassador of the Prince of Peace.

You are not perhaps sufficiently aware of the dangerous tendency of charging members of the community with entertaining democratic principles, and seeking the subversion of public order: in the present instance it might have been attended with the most injurious and fatal consequences to the reputation and interest of several persons belonging to the Society in question, had not a providential circumstance induced a noble personage who is a firm supporter

porter of, and closely connected with government to institute an inquiry into the accusation, and when satisfied that the whole was utterly void of truth, and that the persons who were in the most cruel manner thus held up to public contempt, were innocent of the foul aspersions cast upon their allegiance; to his immortal honour did not let the subject rest until he had borne the most honourable testimony to the characters of those who were said to be implicated in the charge: and it can be proved that the bp. of ———, (always a champion of truth) with a candour which adds lustre to the episcopal character, has expressed his conviction, that there did not appear to be any ground for such injurious reflections. Turn then, sir, to the calumniator in whom you have placed such implicit confidence, and *behold he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief and brought forth falsehood; he made a pit and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made; his mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down on his own pate.* *

* Psalm 7. v. 14, 15, and 16.

D

When

When we behold our beloved sovereign maintaining his character as *Defender of the Faith**; see a Horsley controverting with irresistible arguments the theological errors of a Priestley; a Watson vindicating the authenticity of the Holy Scriptures against the infidelity and blasphemy of a Paine; a Porteus surrounded by hundreds of professing Christians of every denomination, preaching a free Salvation by the Cross of Christ, and view others of exalted rank standing foremost in defence of truth, we cannot help venerating a constitution supported by such faithful guardians of the public peace; and it is our duty to supplicate a

* A letter received by the Missionary Society from an eminent divine at Berlin, written in the name of many religious persons residing in Prussia and Silesia, contains the following remarkable passage.

“ God has given you a King, who acknowledges the infinitely greater empire of Christ; who confessed before the world the everlasting Godhead of Christ, in an age when it was publicly denied; and who, from a praiseworthy zeal in this great cause, ordered the university of Gottingen to offer a prize for the best demonstration of that great and eternal truth, that *Jesus Christ is the only true and everlasting God*. May the reign of this crowned confessor of Jesus be still for many years to come an eminent blessing to the world; and may Jesus, the King of Glory, confess one day King George the Third, before his Father, and before his holy Angels, because he confessed him before men upon earth!” To this pious ejaculation I most heartily say Amen and Amen.

throne

throne of grace that they may be enlightened from above by God the Holy Spirit; and when translated to a better world, exalted amongst the princes of his people to dwell for ever in the celestial courts of the King of Kings.

Whilst you were dealing out invectives, without confining yourself to weight or measure, it would have been right to have corroborated your assertions by facts that had come under your own observation, or which could have been well-attested by credible witnesses, thereby illustrating the positions so positively laid down; you are pleased to say, that among those called Methodists there are many whom they would no more countenance than yourself,---“ wandering
 “ enthusiasts, they are, who know nothing of
 “ the principles of Christianity, or even of
 “ sound reasoning upon any of its doctrines;
 “ but perverting the words of scripture, catch the
 “ ear with declamatory rant, and are often,
 “ *very often* seen to overpower the pious heart,
 “ and drive their best disposed attendants to
 “ madness.” Now, sir, as you have spoken so
very confidently, give me leave to ask if *you* have
 ever seen a single instance. I freely confess that I
 have often heard the same tale, and in my childish

days, perhaps it made as deep an impression upon my mind as stories of spectres and apparitions, but confess it has never been my lot to see any man, or set of men driven to *madness* by the preaching or declamation of any person, even the greatest enthusiast, calling himself a minister of Christ. I have frequently heard men in their Anathema's against the Methodists utter the same language with yourself, and have known some set themselves up for judges in this matter, of whom it was to be feared that *they* "knew nothing of the principles of Christianity, or even of sound reasoning upon any of its principles." That many a pious man has been charged with madness for his attachment to religion is certain and has been witnessed from the incarnation of our Lord until the present day; among other instances which might be adduced to support this observation, permit me to call to your recollection that when Paul, who in his day was accounted a "wandering enthusiast," pleaded before Agrippa, and declared the manner of his conversion, Festus immediately charged him with madness, but the Holy Apostle denied the accusation with this manly reply, *I am not mad most noble Festus, but speak forth the words of*

of

of truth and soberness *. I verily believe, in that solemn day when assembled worlds will surround the judgment seat of Christ, to hear the awful sentence of *come ye blessed, or depart ye cursed*, many of the humble followers of the Lamb, who, unlettered and unlearned, have suffered reproach, and experienced the sneers of ungodly men during their pilgrimage through life, will then be conducted amidst the shouts of angels and acclamations of the whole hierarchy of Heaven, to seats *prepared for them from the foundation of the world* †; and many who despised them while here below, will then be constrained to point to each individual, and, using the language of an apocryphal writer, say, *This was he whom we had in derision and a proverb of reproach: We fools counted his life madness, and his end to be without honor* ‡.

It must be acknowledged that you have carried your enmity to our external foes to a considerable length, when you express a wish, that should the French nation “return to God,” and “have some principle whereon to rest” the basis of a treaty of peace, our rulers will “consider them as so far degraded from the

* Acts 26. v. 25. † Matt. 25. v. 34. ‡ Wisdom 5. v. 3 and 4.

“proud

“proud rank they have assumed to themselves,
 “as on such an occasion to refuse to treat
 “with them in their *own tongue*. If we con-
 template the worse than Egyptian darkness in
 which great part of that unhappy nation is en-
 veloped by infidelity and sin, it should induce
 us to implore God to *turn the disobedient to the
 wisdom of the just* *; and not to lavish unqua-
 lified abuse even on our greatest enemies, as a
 conduct of this nature has a tendency to widen
 the breach rather than to conciliate their af-
 fections. Should it please God to restore peace
 to both nations, it is of little importance whe-
 ther we treat with them in *French* or *English*,
 and I firmly believe if our rulers could effect
 it upon safe and honourable terms, it would not
 be matter of controversy whether it should be
 made in *Sanscreeet* or *Greek*.

The exertions of the Union Society to esta-
 blish a Sunday school at Chislehurst, and to in-
 troduce discourses “for the young and the old
 “too,” may be defended upon Christian prin-
 ciples, but a thorough discussion of these
 points would lead me beyond my present de-
 sign; your acknowledgement, however, that the

* Luke 1. v. 17.

flock, committed to your care, are not so diligent as formerly in their attendance upon the means of grace; and that the “young and the old” “too” are “sadly fallen off of late,” from commemorating the dying love of our Lord, is a strong reason why attempts should be made by *any* religious society, whose sentiments are orthodox in the fundamental doctrines of our faith, to collect the scattered sheep, now wandering from their shepherd, that they may finally be brought into the fold of Christ.

It seldom occurs that where the Gospel of our salvation is clearly and explicitly preached, *whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear**, and the minister is determined *not to know any thing amongst men, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified*†, that the congregation loathe the heavenly manna, and reject the counsel of God against themselves; on the contrary, I have no hesitation in saying, that where the word of life is faithfully dispensed, there the churches are most crowded with hearers. In proof of this remark we have a striking instance in a neighbouring village, where the pastor is truly *a burning and a*

* Ezek. 2. v. 7.

† 1 Cor. 2. v. 2.

shining

*shining light**; and it would be matter of rejoicing to my soul, to hear that every pulpit, within these realms was occupied with ministers, who, like Paul, travail as in birth for immortal souls; then we should experience the fulfilment of the promise, that *the envy of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim*†.

Blessed be God that I have lived to see the dawn of this glorious day, and to witness, in a great measure, the downfall of bigotry; it is high time that the partition wall, which this unchristian spirit hath raised between professors of every denomination, should be removed, and every individual concur in promoting brotherly love and Christian unity. A late eminent divine has very justly observed, that “ narrow
“ as the way is which leadeth unto life, it is
“ yet wide enough to admit persons of divided
“ judgment in things indifferent. There may
“ be several paths in one and the same road;
“ and shall I be so weak, or so malicious as to
“ suppose that a professing brother is not in the
“ way to everlasting happiness, only because he

* John, 5. v. 35.

† Isaiah, 11. v. 13.

“ does

“ does not walk arm in arm with me, and
 “ tread in my particular track ?” * If our hearts
 are right with God, and it is our continual aim
 to promote his glory, there will be no conten-
 tion what particular denomination of Christians
 shall, or shall not, preach the Gospel of the
 kingdom, or any longer a jealousy at their indi-
 vidual exertions in this glorious work.

Founded in this spirit, a society now exists
 in our British Israel, and is daily increasing,
 composed of ministers and persons of every de-
 nomination amongst men, who hold the truth

* The same excellent writer in a note upon this subject
 has introduced the following beautiful remark, which had
 been made to him by a Christian brother of a different deno-
 mination from himself.

“ I have seen a field here, and another there stand thick with
 “ corn; an hedge or two has parted them: at the proper sea-
 “ son the reaper entered; soon the earth was disburthened,
 “ and the grain was conveyed to its destined place, where,
 “ blended together in the barn or in the stack, it could not be
 “ known that an hedge once separated this corn from that.
 “ Thus it is with the church: here it grows, as it were
 “ in different fields: severed it may be, by various hedges.
 “ By and by, when the harvest is come, all God’s wheat
 “ shall be gathered into the garner, without one single
 “ mark to distinguish that once they differed in the out-
 “ ward circumstantial of modes and forms.” Vide Top-
 lady’s Works, vol. III. p. 338.

as it is in Jesus; and whose indefatigable zeal has stimulated Christian churches in foreign countries, to unite with them in sending the ever-blessed Gospel to heathen nations. It is not many weeks since that, at least, three hundred ministers, from various parts of the three kingdoms, met in the metropolis, to concert measures *for the lengthening of Zion's cords, and the strengthening of her stakes;** and at the close of their annual meeting, about fifty ministers (and many brethren) of the Episcopal, Presbyterian, Independent, and Methodist, denominations, united together as one body in Christ, to eat of the same bread, and drink of the same cup, in remembrance that Christ died and is risen again. When the world at large behold a conduct so like the primitive church, they must exclaim, *see how these Christians love!*

Far be it from me sir to entertain against you, any sentiment that should indicate a vindictive spirit; I feel my own infirmities and failings too much to anathematize even the weakest or most depraved of my fellow men; it is the Christian's duty to pity where he cannot praise; it is not the condemnation of the man, but the

* Isaiah 54. v. 2.

refutation of his errors to which I am called on the present occasion: my earnest prayer, however, is, that through the agency of the Divine Spirit upon your heart, you may have such discoveries of the infinite value of immortal souls, and the glories of our Redeemer's kingdom, as shall induce you to adopt the prophet's determination, and in the face of a gain-saying world declare, *for Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof goeth forth as brightness and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth**: then will you no longer be jealous of the assistance of the poorest or most unworthy of God's children, if their only aim is to promote his glory, and the prosperity of the Christian church.

May the Holy Spirit guide you into all truth, and if after a well-spent life in the Lord's vineyard, either publicly or privately, you should be translated to the seat *nearest* to the Throne of God, I shall rejoice in beholding it, though only admitted within the gates of

*Isaiah 62. v. 1.

Paradise and permitted to bow at an humble distance among the lowest order of celestial spirits.

I am, fir,

Yours, &c.

A Lover of my Country,

And a Friend to Truth.

POSTSCRIPT.

POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE the foregoing sheets were printed, Mr. Wollaston has had the temerity to publish a second and cheap edition of his pamphlet, wherein he has omitted the sanguinary paragraph inserted in the advertisement prefixed to the first impression, and a *few* of the violent expressions before used ; although he still persists in calling the members of the Union Society “ French Emissaries,” “ Emissaries from “ Seditious Societies,” &c. &c.; he acknowledges, however, his assertion, that this Society “ is *more* than suspected to be of a seditious tendency,” *wants proof* ; but instead of healing the wound so unjustly inflicted, he has applied a caustic to it, by pleading in his justification, “ the manner in which the house “ at Chislehurst had been taken, and from the “ person who was the principal in that trans-
“ action

" action having been refused admission into the
 " volunteer corps at Greenwich, on account of
 " his principles, together with the *very suspicious*
cious name by which the Society calls itself :"
 the circumstances respecting the hire of the
 house and the name of the society have been
 already explained, but as a personal attack is now
 made on the character of Mr. C--l--n the person
 herein alluded to, who is elsewhere called the
 leader of the Society, it is but justice to ob-
 serve, that his house having been licensed, a
 weekly public meeting was held for religious
 exercise, which was immediately construed, by
 evil-minded men, into an assembly for hatching
 sedition, and a whisper to this effect having
 reached the ears of the principal gentlemen of
 the town, who ballotted for the volunteers,
 they, acting with that prudence which became
 them, of course rejected him ; but when the
 corps was formed, the military committee,
 which consists of all the officers and a few vo-
 lunteers, being of opinion that the suspicion
 was ideal, desired Major C---b---ll, than
 whom a more worthy man does not breathe,
 to request the balloting committee to admit
 him, he was however told that the case had
 been decided upon, and that when any per-
 son

son was negatived, no gentleman was called upon to state the grounds on which he gave his vote of exclusion; and it can be proved that a member of the last-mentioned committee afterwards assured Mr. C. that they were satisfied no suspicion could attach to his character. In proof that the military committee disbelieved the calumny, they sent for Mr. C. who is by trade a hatter, and desired him to supply a great part of the bear skin brushes, and cockades, which were wanted for the use of the volunteers.

As Mr. Wollaston, and through him, the public, have been most grossly imposed upon, it is right to repel this personal attack, by the following extracts of letters, from one of the noblemen who investigated the charge, to a gentleman at Greenwich, on the occasion, and the authenticity of which is indisputable, having been seen by several persons of the first respectability.

"I am perfectly confident the ----- of -----
 "is *most clearly* of opinion that nothing in *any*
 "degree improper can attach to the prejudice
 of ----- or Mr. C--l---n or Mr. -----."

Again.

Again. "I desire you will tell Mr. C---l---n
 "and Mr. ----- that no one whom I have
 "talked to, entertains *any* idea against their
 "characters as *dutiful and loyal subjects*:" and
 on this occasion it is necessary to add, that the
 character of no individual belonging to the
 Union Society was impeached on the en-
 quiry.

Upon the whole the calumny which has
 been raised against the Society in question can
 be controverted by evidence the most irrefra-
 gable and conclusive, and the wanton cruelty
 which must have possessed the hearts of those
 who have imposed on Mr. W. ought to cover
 them with eternal shame, but to use the lan-
 guage of a well-known writer, it is hoped that
 "the ACCUSING SPIRIT, which flew up to
 "heaven's chancery with the deed, blushed as
 "he gave it in, and the RECORDING ANGEL
 "as he wrote it down, dropped a tear upon
 "the page and blotted it out for ever."

F I N I S.

